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**Contact: Jean Overstreet**  
**Phone: (919) 657-0580**  
**Email: [jean@i2icenter.org](mailto:jean@i2icenter.org)**  
**[www.i2icenter.org](http://www.i2icenter.org)**

## **i2i Launches Community Inclusion Initiative for Individuals with Mental Illness**

The [i2i Center for Integrative Health](http://www.i2icenter.org) is launching a new initiative to promote community inclusion for people with mental illness. The initiative is called *I'm IN: Community Inclusion*. This is a joint project of i2i Center for Integrative Health, [Alliance Behavioral Healthcare](http://www.alliancebehavioralhealthcare.org), and the NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services.

i2i Executive Director Mary Hooper described the initiative saying, “The goal of *I'm IN* is to put into place more policies, programs, and practices that support individuals with mental illnesses so that they can participate more fully in the activities that define everyday community life. The initiative will address the harsh reality that many people with serious mental illness are unemployed and may have fragile connections to the mainstream of community life.”

*I'm IN* will convene individuals with mental illness and representatives of existing mental health advocacy groups, community collaboratives, local managed care organizations, the NC Practice Improvement Collaborative, behavioral health providers, state agency representatives, and others in order to promote the goal of inclusion of people with mental illness in their communities.

An Advisory Committee is being formed to guide the development of this project. Much of the content and structure of *I'm IN* will be adapted from a toolkit created by the Temple University Collaborative called *Jump-Starting Community Living and Participation*. This nationally-recognized toolkit provides practical guidance and structure for individuals and groups that are motivated to make a significant difference in including people with mental illness within their communities.

i2i Center for Integrative Health will sponsor several events across North Carolina in 2018 and 2019 to share information and to stimulate innovative pilot projects. One of these events will be a part of i2i's Center's yearly conference in Pinehurst, NC, December 5-7th.

For more information on *I'm IN* or to volunteer to help please, contact Project Director Michael Owen, at [Michael@i2icenter.org](mailto:Michael@i2icenter.org).